

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

1. (Currently Amended) An electrocoat (EC) material comprising a bactericide comprising a bismuth compounds, the material comprising

(A) at least one ~~self-crosslinking and/or externally~~ crosslinking binder ~~containing~~comprising groups convertible to ~~(potentially)~~ cationic or anionic groups and reactive functional groups able to undergo thermal crosslinking reactions which

(i) ~~with~~with themselves or with complementary reactive functional groups in ~~the~~a self-crosslinking binder, or

~~in the case of the externally crosslinking binder, with~~with complementary reactive functional groups present in a crosslinking agents (B)

~~are able to undergo thermal crosslinking reactions,~~

(B) ~~optionally if desired,~~ at least one crosslinking agent comprising the complementary reactive functional groups, and

(C) a bactericide comprising at least one bismuth compound.

2. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in~~of claim 1, comprising, ~~based on its solids,~~ from 0.05 to 4% by weight of bismuth compound (C), based on material solids.

3. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in~~of claim 1 ~~or 2,~~ wherein the bismuth compounds ~~are~~comprises a bismuth carboxylates.

4. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in~~of claim 3, wherein the bismuth carboxylates are formed from carboxylic acids selected from the group consisting of aliphatic carboxylic acids and aromatic carboxylic acids.

5. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 4, wherein ~~apart from the carboxylic acid group the aliphatic carboxylic acids contain no other functional group~~ are monofunctional.
6. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 4 ~~or 5~~, wherein the bismuth compound (C) is bismuth ethylhexanoate.
7. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 4, wherein the bismuth compound (C) is bismuth subsalicylate.
8. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 7, wherein the bismuth subsalicylate (C) has a bismuth content of from 56 to 60% by weight.
9. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in any of~~ claims 1 ~~to 8~~, wherein the binder (A) ~~contains (potentially)~~ comprises groups convertible to cationic groups.
10. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in any of~~ claims 1 ~~to 9~~, wherein the reactive functional groups ~~are~~ comprise hydroxyl groups.
11. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in any of~~ claims 1 ~~to 10~~, wherein the complementary reactive functional groups ~~are~~ comprise blocked isocyanate groups.
12. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in any of~~ claims 1 ~~to 11~~, comprising a ~~wherein the~~ crosslinking agents (AB) comprising a ~~are~~ blocked polyisocyanates.
13. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in any of~~ claims 1 ~~to 12~~, further comprising at least one additive (D).

14. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in~~of claim 13, wherein the additive (D) is a pigment.

15. (Currently Amended) The material ~~as claimed in~~of claim 14, wherein the pigments (D) are selected from the group consisting of color pigments, effect pigments, electrically conductive pigments, magnetically shielding pigments, fluorescent pigments, extender pigments, and anticorrosion pigments, are organic and inorganic.

16. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing an electrocoat material as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 15, which comprises~~adding at least one bactericide comprising a bismuth compound selected preferably from the group consisting of bismuth carboxylates to a conventional electrocoat material.

17. (Currently Amended) The process ~~as claimed in~~of claim 16, wherein the bismuth carboxylate is~~compound has been~~ selected from the group consisting of bismuth ethylhexanoate, ~~and/or bismuth subsalicylate, and mixtures comprising at least one of the foregoing.~~

18. (Currently Amended) The use of an electrocoat material as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 15~~ for producing electrocoats and/or multicoat paint systems by wet-on-wet techniques.